

What You Need to Know About the GED Social Studies Test

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About the Test

- ◎ The GED Social Studies test contains 50 multiple choice questions.
- ◎ Test Time is 70 minutes.

More About the Test

◎ Test Covers

- History
- Geography
- Civics and Government
- Economics

BUT....

More About the Test

- BUT test actually measures **CRITICAL THINKING** skills
 - **Comprehension:** restating in your own words, paraphrasing, and summarizing
 - **Application:** using given information to solve problems, putting abstract ideas into practical situations, and identifying connections and relationships and how they apply
 - **Analysis:** identifying parts, determining arrangements, and logic
 - **Evaluation:** making decision, supporting views, and value judgments

More About the Test

- ◎ Questions consist of a single question or set of questions based on either
 - 1. Prose-only: articles, speeches, textbooks, letters, laws, and historical documents**
 - 2. Visual-only: maps, graphs, charts, tables, diagrams, cartoons, and photographs**
 - 3. Combined: source materials containing both prose and graphics**

More About the Test

Passages will include:

- ◉ At least one “practical” document will be included (voter’s guide, tax form, budget tool, survey, etc.)
- ◉ At least one part from either the
 - U.S. Constitution
 - U.S. Declaration of Independence
 - Federalist Papers
 - Landmark Supreme Court Cases
- ◉ At least one map of the U.S.

Sample Prose Selection

Directions: Choose the one best answer to each item

Items 1 to 2 refer to the following information.

1. Five amendments to the U.S. Constitution directly affect voting qualifications.
 - a. The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited states from using race or color as standards for determining the right to vote.
 - b. The Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, prohibited the states from using gender as a voting qualification.
 - c. The Twenty-Third Amendment, ratified in 1961, granted the residents of Washington, D.C. a voice in the selection of the President and Vice President.
 - d. The Twenty-Fourth Amendment, ratified in 1964, outlawed the state poll tax as a requirement for voting in national elections.
 - e. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment, ratified in 1971, prohibited states from denying the vote to anyone 18 years old or over.

Sample Prose Question

2. Which statement about the five amendments appears to be the best summary?
- a. They affirm the right of women to vote.
 - b. They limit the right of U.S. citizens to vote according to where they live.
 - c. They prohibit the use of certain requirements as voting qualifications.
 - d. They prohibit some citizens from voting.
 - e. They permit certain qualifications to be used in voting.

Answers

- ◎ Question Number 1: “c” is the correct answer.
 - “They prohibit the use of certain requirements as voting qualifications.”
- ◎ Question Number 2: “c” is the answer that correctly encompasses ALL of the amendments given in the prose section.

Sample Visual Question

Directions: Questions 3 and 4 refer to the following graph.

Percentage of Europeans in October 1990 Who Supported:

Common European Foreign Policy

51%

Single European Currency in 5-6
Years

55%

European Central Bank

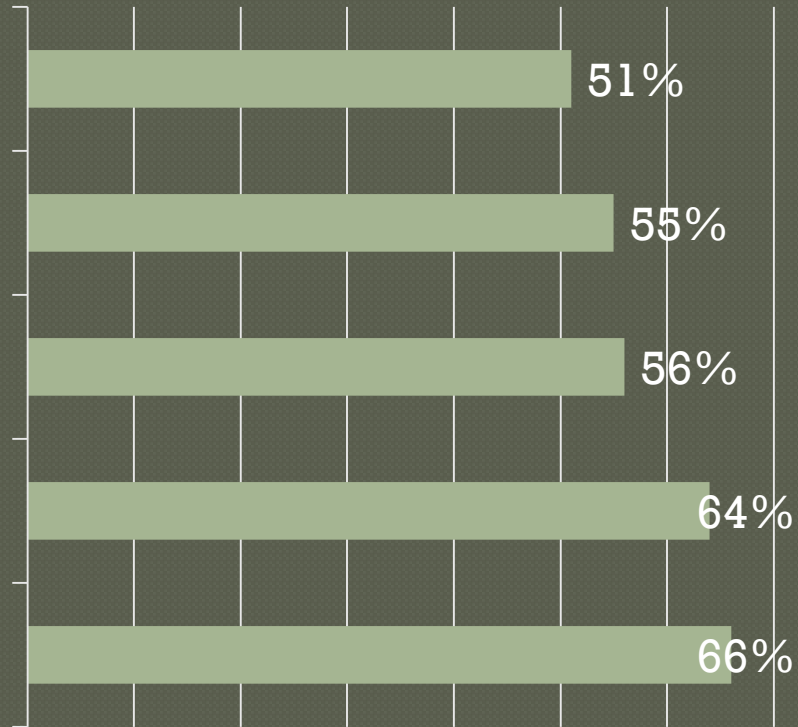
56%

Active All-European Parliament

64%

Common Security/Defense Policy

66%



Sample Visual Question

3. Which of the following must happen in the modern world if the majority opinions shown in the graph are to be successfully carried out?
- a. North American and Asian countries must give up some of their military power.
 - b. The industrialized countries in Western Europe must control agricultural countries there.
 - c. European Union nations must cooperate to enforce common political and economic policies.
 - d. Productivity must increase immediately and equally among European Union nations.
 - e. Free trade in Western Europe must be curbed by stronger international border controls.

Answer

◎ Question Number 3: “c” is the correct answer

- “European Union nations must cooperate to enforce common political and economic policies.”
- “c” is the only answer which uses all of the data to arrive at the conclusion.

“Critical Thinking” Question Tips

1. Look at (Analyze) all of the information
 - What is the graph/chart/reading about?
 - Title of the visual/reading selection?
 - Important details?
 - Where is the selection from? Constitution? Declaration?
 - Look for patterns/similarities in the information
 - How is the information the same?
 - How is the information different?

“Critical Thinking” Question Tips

2. Put the information in your own words (Comprehension)

- If you struggle with a word try to put a different and/or more familiar word with it
- Don't get stuck on unfamiliar words
- Try to use the context of the passage to understand unfamiliar words
- Use your scratch paper to write out key facts from long reading sections

“Critical Thinking” Question Tips

3. Think Logically (Evaluation/Application)

- “Which of these things is not like the others?”
- Eliminate obviously wrong answers
- Does the answer you chose make sense?
 - Ex. If you are answering a graph question with 10,000, does the graph even go up that high?
- If you think several answers are correct, pick the choice that BEST answers the question

Resources

- ◎ The official GED Illinois guide includes practice questions and helpful hints
 - <http://www.gedi.org/staffinfo/teachresources/start.pdf>
- ◎ Online GED practice test
 - <http://steckvaughnadult.hmhco.com/en/gedpractice.htm>